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## Plan to create more Bumiputera entrepreneurs

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SERDANG, Fri. - The Entrepreneur Development Ministry is identifying several companies involved in the services sector to be placed under its Franchise Development Programme, to help create more Bumiputera entrepreneurs.

Its deputy secretary-general, Datuk Khalid Hussain, said the ministry was looking to franchise companies involved in "the supply of products and maintenance of high-rise buildings."

"The ministry is confident that this programme can create more Bumiputera entrepreneurs and this is why we are looking for new products to be franchised by Bumiputera businessmen.

The ministry now has 42 franchisers who deal in a variety of food items, household appliances and consumer products together with 220 Bumiputera franchisees in the country.

Khalid said the move would not only enable local franchisers to quickly expand their existing operations but also allow them to establish similar operations abroad.

"In fact, the franchising concept has been emphasised many times by our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as a field which can derive benefits for both the franchiser and franchisee.

"Bumiputera businessmen can franchise local companies as the initial capital is small as compared to international franchisers," he said.

Khalid was representing deputy Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Idris Jusoh at the opening of the 46th Marrybrown Fried Chicken Restaurant in Taman Sri Serdang here today.

Since establishing its first restaurant in Johor Baru in 1981, the Marrybrown restaurant chain has also ventured into the overseas market. It now has four outlets in China and one in Brunei Darussalam.

Also present was the outlet's franchisee Abdul Rahman Nordin and officials from the ministry's Franchise Development Programme.

Khalid said the number of Bumiputera businessmen in the growing fast food business was now minimal.

"More efforts should be taken to encourage Bumiputera businessmen to become franchisees of new products. Bumiputera businessmen who have the required capital but lack experience should obtain the franchises of local businesses as the franchiser will provide training, management and devise a proper accounting system to make the business a viable venture for them.

"There must also be constant communication links and discussions held between both parties for mutual benefit and for the franchiser to expand his operations here or seek new overseas ventures," Khalid said adding the the concept was popular in Europe.

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